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TAGS: [EWWT](#) [CASC](#) [HR](#)
SUBJECT: RECREATIONAL SKIPPERS NEED LICENSE TO SAIL CROATIAN FLAGGED
BOATS

¶1. SUMMARY. The Government of Croatia adopted a law (effective Jan. 1, 2006) requiring all recreational skippers chartering Croatian flagged vessels to have a certificate of competence. Under the law, the Ministry of Sea, Tourism and Transport will only recognize licenses issued by national authorities of other states. As no such national licensing regime exists in the U.S., Americans wishing to charter and pilot a Croatian-flagged vessel may be required to pass a certification test at the Ministry in Zagreb or a designated harbormaster's office on the coast. Post will add this information to the Zagreb Consular Information Sheet. END SUMMARY

¶2. The Croatian Ministry of Sea, Tourism and Transport contacted post in late 2005 to provide information on a new law requiring recreational skippers to have certificates of competence in order to pilot Croatian-flagged crafts in Croatian waters. The Ministry requested that post provide information and examples of equivalent U.S. certificates. Post explained that there is no federal-level licensing of recreational skippers in the U.S. Although some states and private associations issue certificates of competency, these are not widely held among American boaters.

¶3. After reviewing criteria for sailing certificates from two private organizations (the US Sailing Association and the American Sailing Association), an official from the Ministry of Sea, Tourism and Transport told Econoff those certificates meet Croatia's standards; however, because there is no U.S. federal agency that oversees those associations, the Croatian government could not accept them as the private organizations are not federally-regulated.

¶4. Some states are now requiring boaters' licenses, but there is still no federal agency overseeing the process. Econoff stressed that tourists are allowed to use state-issued motor vehicle licenses for 90 days, but the ministry official said under the new law, he can't give the same consideration to state-issued boaters' licenses. The Ministry official said he regrets there is no "competent US authority" to sign an MOU regarding boater's licenses.

¶5. The Ministry official said tourists can be certified in Croatia at harbormasters' offices in Pula, Rijeka, Senj, Zadar, Sibenik, Split, Ploce and Dubrovnik, as well as at the ministry in Zagreb. Candidates need to contact the harbormaster's office or the ministry to schedule the test, but added the test will be administered only to groups. The certification costs 850 kuna (\$145) and is valid indefinitely. A study guide is available and the test can be administered in Croatian, English, German and Italian.

¶6. Econoff told the ministry officials this information would be included in the Consular Information Sheet to advise U.S. tourists to check with the chartering company or the Croatian government to ensure they have the proper certificates in order to legally charter a Croatian flagged vessel or to plan to take the certification test at one of the designated sites.

BRADTKE